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Raise Sheep



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ROUND UP SLACKER ACRES

SHEEP WILL HELP YOU

IN THE WINNING of this war guns and bullets are no more important than bread and meat. Several million acres of land in the United States produce good summer feed for sheep, but are not grazed at present. Effort should be made to secure the most economic use of every acre, and much may be accomplished in this direction by the raising of a few sheep in public parks, on golf courses and private lawns. The use of sheep in lawns and parks has been extensive in England. The labor-saving value of sheep is important, for they are neat and effective grass cutters.

WAR AND SHEEP

War has given the sheep and wool industry a stupendous task. There must be 20 sheep back of every soldier to clothe and equip him. This need has made sheep raising a patriotic as well as a profitable undertaking. Sheep require little bread grain, and as both wool and mutton are in strong demand, the development of the industry will contribute materially to the Nation's food and clothing supply. "Farm Sheep Raising for Beginners" (Farmers' Bulletin 840), a recent publication of the United States Department of Agriculture, contains all the general directions needed to make a start. Another recent publication of the department, entitled "Sheep and Intensive Farming" (Yearbook 1917, Separate 750), will also be found helpful.

PROFITS

For the present season wool has about trebled in price and the price of lambs has about doubled. The gross annual returns from ewes of breeding age may be expected to range from \$8 to \$15 a head, depending upon the percentage of lambs raised, the weight of the fleeces, and the values for these products. The lamb and wool yield depend largely upon the breed selected. So the choice of a breed is a very important matter. There are 12 breeds of improved sheep which are well

established in the United States and a number of others are gaining in popularity. These breeds differ widely in their special points of usefulness for various sections and systems of management. These points are carefully developed in "Breeds of Sheep for the Farm" (Farmers' Bulletin 576).

REQUIRE LITTLE BREAD GRAINS

Sheep require a very much smaller proportion of grain than is required by other meat animals, as they get much of their nourishment from rough permanent pasture, and at the same time they keep down the weeds, which is an improvement to the pasture. This **Weeds** information, with much else of interest and value, is to be found in "The Place of Sheep on New England Farms" (Farmers' Bulletin 929).

HOUSING AND EQUIPMENT

Sheep raising does not require expensive equipment or heavy labor. In mild latitudes little housing is needed. Important features of buildings for sheep, drawings, and bills of materials for barns, sheds, feed racks, etc., are given in "Equipment for Farm Sheep Raising" (Farmers' Bulletin 810). In any sheep enterprise provision must be made for the guarding or fencing in of the flock, for not only are the animals prone to stray from home pastures, but they are favorite prey for dogs, which annually inflict great losses on the industry. Winter care must be provided for, and feed and sheltered quarters must be available in cold weather. Persons who desire to raise sheep are advised to enter the industry with a view of staying for several years at least. The useful life of a sheep is about 6 years.

HOW TO GET INFORMATION

All the Farmers' Bulletins mentioned in this text are available for free distribution and may be obtained by writing to the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Other free bulletins on the subject of sheep raising are "The Sheep Tick and Its Eradication by Dipping" (Farmers' Bulletin 798), "Sheep Scab" (Farmers' Bulletin 713),

and "The Sheep-killing Dog" (Farmers' Bulletin 938). Many excellent publications on sheep are also issued by the States for distribution to their own citizens. An inquiry addressed to your State agricultural college will bring you information as to what has been issued by your own State, and your county agent can supplement this advice by suggestions as to the adaptation of directions to your local conditions. Teachers of agriculture will find useful the publication entitled "Instruction in Sheep and Goat Husbandry" (States Relations Service, Document 76).

Although the authoritative information contained in the Government and State publications is of the highest value, it should be supplemented if possible by reading at least a few of the many helpful books on the subject of sheep raising. Ask at your public library for some of the following, suggested by the American Library Association's Food Information Committee: "Sheep Farming in North America," by Craig and Marshall (Macmillan, \$1.50), which covers the selection of the flock and its efficient management at the different seasons of the year; Wing's "Sheep Farming in America" (Breeder's Gazette, Chicago, \$1), a manual of practical sheep management; Kleinheinz's "Sheep Management, Breeds, and Judging" (F. Kleinheinz, Madison, Wis., \$1.60), a textbook for the flock master in simple, everyday language dealing with the practical problems of sheep husbandry; Stewart's "The Shepherd's Manual" (Orange Judd Co., \$1); Doane's "Sheep Feeding and Farm Management" (Ginn & Co., \$1). Lack of space makes it impossible to mention other good books on sheep raising, including all those on specialized phases of the subject.

"THE AVERAGE MAN LEARNS FROM HIS OWN EXPERIENCE, THE WISE MAN FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHERS"

